



Project Summaries

Local Collaboration

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School Health Initiative Program (SHIP) Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools

Funded by a three-year, \$2.3 million grant from The Williamsburg Community Health Foundation

SHIP is: a school-based community partnership dedicated to creating a culture of wellness for the entire community by promoting and supporting healthy eating, active lifestyle habits, and access to health care for all children.

SHIP's Partners Include: The Williamsburg Community Health Foundation, The Peninsula Health District of the Virginia Department of Health, The Coalition for Obesity Prevention- Peninsula, The Network for Latino People, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), PTA Council, James City-County Department of Parks and Recreation, The Virginia Cooperative Extension, R.F. Wilkinson Family YMCA, Sentara Regional Medical Center, Olde Towne Medical Center, representatives from the faith community and business community, student groups, and many other key stakeholders in the community.

KidLink Teams at Each School: meet monthly to plan and implement SHIP programs at their individual schools; ensure family and community involvement; are supported by the SHIP staff that serve as liaisons between the teams and provide the teams with resources and information; teams include administrators, support staff, teachers, school nurses, Child Nutrition Services staff, students, parents and members of the community.

The SHIP Registered Dietitian: works closely with the school division's Child Nutrition Services Department to assist with the selection of food/beverage items, plan menus, and disseminate nutritional information about foods and beverages offered in the schools; serves as a resource for teachers and community by providing activity ideas, materials, and nutrition information; and assists schools with healthy choices for vending machines, fund-raising and in-school celebrations.

The SHIP Outreach Workers: identify students not covered by medical insurance; assist parents/guardians of eligible students so that students can be enrolled in FAMIS/FAMIS-Plus; promote regular medical visits for preventive care; and heighten awareness about the community's medical resources.

Student Challenge Clubs: provide opportunities after school for students to improve their nutrition knowledge and skills and to increase their physical activity; integrate, whenever possible, nutrition-fitness information with existing before and after school activities; include classes such as cooking, martial arts, dance, yoga, Ultimate Frisbee, biking, outdoor adventure etc.

Staff Wellness Activities and Programs: promote staff as role models for students; provide free or low-cost opportunities for increasing physical fitness and nutrition knowledge/skills at convenient locations and times; are based on input from staff and include activities such as stress management classes, cooking and nutrition classes, Pilates, Yoga, dance; and physical activity competitions with incentives.

SHIP Physical Education Resource Teacher: serves as a resource to help teachers integrate more physical activity information and opportunities into the core curriculum; provides ideas and resources for "brain breaks" and indoor and outdoor recess.

SHIP Summer Camp Partnership with JCC Parks and Recreation: provides increased opportunities for 700+ campers to be more physically active and learn more about healthy eating; reinforces and extends the healthy habits learned by students during the school year; and supports and promotes parents and summer camp staff as role models for healthy lifestyles.

SHIP's Role in the Community: Serves as a catalyst and coordinator, bringing together community partners and resources to promote and support healthy lifestyles; identifies community needs related to healthy eating, physical activity and medical insurance, initiates dialogue and collaboration among community partners to meet the needs; provides information about healthy happenings in the community and tips for healthier lifestyles by means of the SHIP website and SHIP's monthly newsletters.

Evaluation: quantitative pre/post-data includes BMI scores and survey responses from students, parents and staff related to knowledge, attitudes, values and behaviors; and qualitative pre-/post- data and ongoing data from focus groups and structured interviews.

SHIP's Consultants: Healthy Kids Challenge, a Kansas-based consulting group, provides guidance and technical assistance for SHIP; The Medical Foundation, Boston, oversees and implements SHIP's evaluation.

Further Information: website, <http://www.wjcc.k12.va.us/content/admin/studentservices/ship/index.html>; SHIP Coordinator, Denise Corbett, 757-220-5347, corbettd@wjcc.k12.va.us.

**HEALTHY VIRGINIANS/HEALTHY STUDENTS
COLLABORATIVE EFFORT
FOR
ADDRESSING CHILDHOOD OVERWEIGHT
Chesterfield County Health Department
Chesterfield County Public Schools**

September 20, 2007

Collaboration

Chesterfield County Public Schools and Health Department's most significant collaborative effort, the School Health Services program established over 25 years ago, continues to provide public health nursing and population based services to the 60 elementary, middle and high school communities.

Addressing overweight and obesity is an excellent example of what has been accomplished with this successful partnership. In the fall of 2002, the health department expanded the health-screening program to include height and weight measurement and the calculation of Body Mass Index-for-Age for students in kindergarten and grades three, seven and 10. The screening program continues today producing five years of data documenting prevalence and trends.

Examples of strategies implemented through the existing partnership include the following:

- Education for parents of students found to be at risk of overweight or overweight.
- Use of prevalence data to obtain funding for school-based programs addressing nutrition and physical activity (examples: High 5 with Fitness and Girls on the Run/Girls on Track.)
- Use of prevalence data to obtain funding for equipment (bicycles, pedometers) for physical education classes and instruction for physical education teachers.
- Nutrition classes in elementary, middle and high schools facilitated by public health nurses.
- Participation by health department in school based Family Fun and Fitness Nights sponsored by school PTAs.
- Expanded population based education provided by public health nurses in school setting.
- Health promotion groups for school staff facilitated by public health nurses.

The collaboration between the school system and the health department has also extended to the policy level. The health department provided consultation and assistance with the development of the Chesterfield County Public School's Wellness Policy and also has a strong presence on the School Health Advisory Board. The health department provides representation on the School Superintendent's Innovation Team addressing the Chesterfield County Public School's Design for Excellence that identifies childhood overweight as a priority for the next six years.

Community Coalition

The Chesterfield County Coalition for Active Children, **COACH**, began in 2002. The concept of COACH was formulated due to the increasing problem of overweight children in Chesterfield County. Bon Secours Richmond was one of the charter members of the group and was involved in the initial organization and planning that led to the development of the coalition. The Coalition is incorporated and has applied for 501-C-3 status. Partners include schools, community groups, faith-based organizations, government and concerned parents. COACH is a resource in the community, whose members care about our children and their futures.

The mission of the Coalition for Active Children is to promote a healthy future for children and their families in Chesterfield County through education and awareness about the lifelong benefits of increased physical activity and good nutrition. COACH also brings awareness to the community about the long-term health risks associated with being overweight or obese.

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Charlottesville Obesity Task Force School Collaboration

The Childhood Obesity Task Force (COTF) is a district-wide collaboration to address the epidemic of childhood overweight within the City of Charlottesville and surrounding counties. It was convened by the Thomas Jefferson Health District in 1999 after BMI data collected on about 1200 students from Albemarle County and Charlottesville City school systems showed overweight prevalence ($\geq 85^{\text{th}}$ percentile) to be about %. The COTF decided to focus its efforts primarily on prevention in four areas: 1) schools; 2) health professionals; 3) physical activity resources; and 3) public education.

Education of the public and professionals is key to obtaining a wholesale change and creating a community that supports physical activity and healthy eating for everyone.

The COTF began its work with schools. Representatives met with each of the principals and subsequently sponsored a school summit where school teams were given the opportunity to secure funding to implement projects to enhance nutrition and/or physical activity. Examples of other successful school-based initiatives include:

- Low-fat milk challenges led to the reduction and removal of high fat milk options in several schools before it was initiated at the state level.
- Healthy snack bar nutritional guidelines and promotions led to a greater variety of lower fat and sugar options and were the foundation for the Virginia Action for Healthy Kids guidelines.
- Creative cooking classes offered after-school provided an opportunity to promote nutrition education while providing useful life skills to students. Guest Chef and Whole Grain Initiatives pilot programs helped to improve community and school relations
- Focus on fruits and vegetables through education and promotions have helped increasing these choices with student lunches.

The school nutrition collaboration was our best example of generating “buy in” within a distinct setting-school -and having a very diverse population speak the same message. Key groups that were brought together were the school board, school administration, school nutrition dept, PTO, Instructional staff, students and parents. Positive goals and initiatives to create a healthy school environment were generated, advocated for and implemented in a relatively short amount of time thanks to the “baby step” approach of measurable and attainable goals the school nutrition champions undertook.

The Governor’s Scorecard program was actively pursued by local school divisions to provide an additional incentive for schools to become healthier and to assist school building teams in meeting Wellness Policy goals. Albemarle and Charlottesville school divisions have accumulated two Gold, seven Silver and three Bronze awards.

To address access to physical activity resources, the COTF compiled and distributed a Youth Physical Activity Guide listing opportunities for youth of all ages to be active in over 25 different types of activity.

The COTF has held two MD Pediatric Grand Rounds and developed several trainings and curriculums for physical education and health teachers, after school programs, Head Start and social services home visitors. This September it is piloting a family camp program for families with overweight children.

To reach the broader community, the COTF has developed and conducted presentations for different PTO/community groups and keeps media well supplied with updates and information. It has recently launched a web site – childhoodobesitytaskforce.org –to help expand information access and motivation for movement to the community.